

South Precinct Email Community Newsletter

October 9, 2006



Dear Community Friends:

Since we last wrote, activity in the precinct has been intense. To highlight just a few items:

- Sept 21st: Shots were fired from one car at another in the area of the Rainier Beach Jack-In-The-Box. One person died and one was seriously injured.
- Sept 23rd: One person died from injuries sustained in a fight with a domestic violence abuser as the person tried to help the survivor of the violence leave the abuser.
- Sept 23rd: An unattended car, left with the engine running and a one-year old child inside, was stolen from outside the victim's residence. Officers located the car nearby; the child was unharmed.
- Sept 25th: A victim died of stab wounds suffered during a domestic violence assault.
- Sept 26th: A person was shot five times at close range during a possible drug deal.
- Sept 28th: A suspect shot at a patrol car, shattering a window, while the officer was in the car. The officer was not injured.
- Sept 29th: A vehicle traveling a high rate of speed crashed and rolled over on the 8400 Block of Seward Park Ave S. The four passengers were injured but alive at the time of the accident.
- Sept 30th: A vehicle traveling at a high rate of speed hit a wooden pole and traffic signal at 57th & Rainier. The four passengers were killed instantly. The impact was such that wreckage from the accident was spread out over several city blocks. Downed power lines from the accident knocked out power in the area for hours.

Additionally, there has been a sharp increase in residential burglaries. We've written before that in a large percentage of residential burglaries, the suspects gained entry through opened and unlocked doors and windows. This is still occurring. However, we're also seeing a spike of forced entry burglaries, with suspects breaking into homes through basement or side windows, rear doors, etc.

When we process all that has occurred these past few weeks, rather than dwell on them or be fearful because of them, we need to look at what we can do to respond to them and prevent things like this from happening to us and those around us.

The police department rarely has the staffing levels to do proactive patrols. Often, officers are going from one 911 call to the next with no opportunity to make proactive contacts that may deter crime. Police officers cannot prevent crime by themselves, but we as individuals can. Officers respond to crime and in many instances deter it by their presence. But they cannot prevent you from abusing a loved one, they cannot prevent you from using drugs, they can't prevent you from leaving your unattended car running or prevent you from driving at excessive speeds. But you as an individual can.

- We can pay attention to how we drive and be more cautious, and encourage others to do the same.
- We can *not* leave our cars running and unattended. We can *not* leave our children unattended.
- We can think about how we process anger. Rather than striking out to cause harm, whether with a hand, knife or gun, take a step back, breath and think.
- We can continue to be observant and report crime. Even though it could take some time for an officer to respond to a burglary call, they will respond. They will gather information and evidence and get it to the detectives for follow-up. In some recent burglaries, officers were unavailable to respond in a timely manner because of other criminal activity occurring at the same time that was at a higher priority level. However, officers were still able to get information from the witnesses and write a detailed report. That information led detectives to identify and locate the suspects. The 911 calls still made a difference.

We as individuals can make a difference.

Until Next Time, Take Care and Stay Safe! (and give us feedback regarding the new newsletter format)

Mark Solomon, South Precinct Crime Prevention Coordinator